

Ways to Promote Meeting Attendance

- **Block captains** - Block captains are critical to neighborhood meeting turnout. Work to have each block covered. The personal invitation always works best.
- **Newsletter** - A one page simple newsletter that invites residents to attend your meeting. Give the date, time, location, and state the topic for discussion. Distribute the newsletter by block captains. (Weed and Seed used to make copies of newsletters at no cost. Neighborhood Services can copy the newsletters if the association provides the paper.) Distribute the newsletter at least one week in advance of the meeting. Post your newsletter at every business in the area. Ask area churches to include a meeting notice in their Sunday bulletins.
- **Offer to give people rides to the meetings** - Sometimes the elderly are reluctant to walk several blocks to a neighborhood meeting, especially if it gets dark early.
- **Use a telephone tree** - Have a telephone committee call neighbors to remind them to attend.
- **Post small re-usable signs at key intersections - "Neighborhood Meeting Tonight"** - Give the location and time of the meeting.
- **Involve kids** - Parents will almost always come to see their children. Have children give a report on their community garden. Let children of all ages perform songs or dances, recite original poetry, or demonstrate their artistic talent. Let different children each month tell what they like about their neighborhood and how they would like to make it different.
- **Offer a door prize** - It does not have to be expensive. Merchants are often willing to make donations of their product or services. Gift certificates for groceries, hair cuts, movies, tickets to a MOJA event, the Aquarium. Be creative.
- **Concentrate on a certain block each month.** Make a special effort to recruit those residents and recognize and introduce them.
- **Food as an incentive** - Offering food is a wonderful incentive, but it is hard to do consistently. For special occasions, ask major restaurants or grocers to supply some items. Pappa John's Pizza, Sticky Fingers, Church's Fried Chicken, Harris Teeter, Food Lion, and Piggly Wiggly have all been known to support neighborhood meetings. A phone call to ask for a meeting with the manager works wonders. Be sure to bring a written request on your association letterhead along with you.
- **Refreshments on a small scale** - Even just cookies and punch as refreshments will go a long way to making people feel comfortable and welcome. Simple refreshments have a way of encouraging people to relax socially.
- **Potluck Supper or Sandwich Social** - Asking people to bring a potluck dish or favorite sandwiches is another way to break the ice. The association could provide cold drinks, potato chips and cookies for the sandwiches.